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PART II

NOTES AND COMMENTS

CUBAN DEVELOPMENTS

In accordance with the 8 May announcement of the resumption of Cuban-Soviet diplomatic relations, Soviet Embassy personnel--many of whom have been drawn from embassies in Mexico City and Montevideo--are beginning to reach Cuba. Ambassador Sergey Mikhaylevich Kudrayavtsev arrived on 17 August.

In a note sent to Fidel Castro on his 34th birthday and published in Havana on 15 August, Khrushchev praised the Cuban leader as a "fighter for liberty" and expressed the hope for "even stronger" Soviet-Cuban relations. On the same day TASS published a Castro reply to an earlier Khrushchev letter of congratulations on the 26th of July anniversary. Castro stated that Soviet "sympathy puts us under still greater obligation to follow the path we have chosen.... The breaking of the chain of imperialist oppression is of tremendous significance for the peoples of Latin America and for all oppressed peoples of the world." He added that Soviet solidarity with Cuba is "unquestionable proof that the peoples fighting for independence are not alone."

On 14 August President Osvaldo Dorticos, an increasingly authoritative spokesman for the regime, told a television audience that "there can be no social progress based on vague and romantic theories and the theory of representative democracy." He stated that the "false social progress" of the United States was based on "the sufferings of Latin Americans and other peoples," and he attacked private enterprise as the root of Cuba's economic ills.

The eighth national congress of Cuba's Popular Socialist (Communist) party opened on 16 August in Havana. The congress, the first since 1952, originally had been scheduled for last month and apparently was rescheduled to coincide with the meetings of the OAS foreign ministers in Costa Rica. The presence at the congress of many relatively high-level foreign Communist delegations suggests a major effort to demonstrate international Communist solidarity with the Castro regime, but their presence in Cuba is likely to alarm other Latin American governments over Soviet intervention in the hemisphere. The gathering provided an opportunity for international Communist liaison and for the further exploitation of Cuba as a base for operations in Latin America.

Mikhail Suslov, secretary of the Soviet party central committee, reportedly declined an invitation to attend the meeting, and the USSR may be represented by Ambassador Kudryavtsev. The Soviet leaders may have chosen not to send a high-ranking party official in order not to focus attention on the USSR's guidance of the Cuban party while the OAS foreign ministers are discussing the dangers to the hemisphere of Communist penetration in Cuba.

Communist China, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Rumania, and Poland sent members of party central committees, and North Korea also sent delegates. Paul Verner, candidate member of the East German politburo, is the highest ranking bloc official known to have come for the meeting. Jacques Duclos, the second-

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ranking official of the French party, and Velio Spano, a member of the Italian Communist party central committee, arrived on 13 August. Most Latin American Communist parties probably are represented at the congress.

The Cuban Government is continuing its policy of extreme provocation against the US. A group of Havana attorneys representing owners of expropriated US properties issued a statement on 12 August which declared that they could find no remedy in the Cuban courts or elsewhere for US-owned companies seized by Cuba. On the eve of the 14 August take-over of the American-owned Moa Bay Nickel company, Cuban police seized the accounting records of the US Government-owned Nicaro Nickel Company, which were being taken to Havana for photostating prior to shipment to Washington.

Indications of opposition to the Castro regime continue. Counterrevolutionary elements in the Cuban merchant marine reportedly will begin a campaign

of sabotage against sugar shipments to the USSR in the near future. Rumors are circulating freely in Havana that an internal uprising in Cuba will coincide with the arrival there of a Caribbean-based invasion force during the period of the foreign ministers' meeting in Costa Rica. The American Embassy has no reliable information substantiating these reports, but it confirms the existence in Havana of an atmosphere of increased apprehension and tensions. The arrest on 16 August of a number of Cuban naval personnel suggests that disaffection in the Cuban Navy had reached significant proportions.

At the OAS foreign ministers' meetings, Costa Rican President Echandi has been antagonized by the Cuban delegation's threat to withdraw as a protest against its treatment in San Jose. Echandi is said to have commented: "Let the Cubans go home if they want to; they are not in charge here." He reportedly added that, if Cuban Foreign Minister Roa wanted, the Costa Rican guards assigned to the Cuban delegation could be removed to see if there would be an assassination attempt against Roa. Further hostility against the Cubans may be aroused among Latin American delegations by the report of a foreign diplomat in Havana that the Cuban National Bank has sent large sums to various other Latin American countries to bribe delegates to the OAS meetings.

If Cuba walks out of the OAS meetings, it may then demand that the UN Security Council resume consideration of the Cuban complaint about US economic aggression which the council referred to the OAS in mid-July.